Week 6: Need for the Study and Practice of Library and Information Science (LIS)
Introduction
The study and practice of Library and Information Science (LIS) is vital in today's world, where knowledge and information serve as the backbone of personal, institutional, and national development. Libraries and information centres act as memory banks of civilisation, while librarians and information professionals ensure access, organisation, and dissemination of information for learning, decision-making, innovation, and cultural preservation.
Understanding why LIS should be studied and practised is essential for appreciating its role in education, research, governance, business, and everyday life.

Importance of Studying LIS

1. Knowledge Organisation and Access

2. LIS equips professionals with the skills to collect, organise, classify, catalogue, and retrieve information efficiently.

3. It ensures that students, researchers, and professionals can easily access relevant information resources without being overwhelmed by information overload.

4. Preservation of Human Heritage

5. Libraries serve as custodians of cultural and intellectual heritage by preserving books, manuscripts, archives, and digital records.

6. Without LIS practices, future generations would lose access to historical records and cultural identity.

7. Support for Education and Research

8. LIS provides resources and services that facilitate formal and informal education.

9. Universities, schools, and research institutions depend on LIS professionals to manage academic materials and support teaching, learning, and research activities.

10. Development of Information Literacy Skills

11. In an era of misinformation and fake news, LIS promotes critical thinking and information literacy—teaching people how to locate, evaluate, and ethically use information.

12. Professional Growth and Career Opportunities

13. Studying LIS opens diverse career paths, including librarianship, archives management, records management, information consultancy, digital librarianship, knowledge management, and research data management.

Contribution to National Development

1. By managing knowledge resources, LIS contributes to policymaking, governance, economic growth, and technological advancement.

2. Information is power, and LIS ensures equitable access to it.

3. Bridging the Digital Divide

4. LIS professionals help communities, especially in developing countries, access ICT tools, digital information, and online resources, thus reducing the gap between information-rich and information-poor societies.

Importance of Practising LIS

1. Efficient Information Management

2. Practising LIS enables professionals to manage different information formats (print, electronic, multimedia) systematically.

3. Support for Decision-Making

4. Policymakers, business leaders, healthcare providers, and educators rely on accurate information. LIS professionals provide relevant and timely information for informed decisions.

5. Promotion of Reading Culture

6. Through public library services, LIS encourages reading habits, lifelong learning, and intellectual growth in communities.

7. Adaptation to Technological Changes

8. Practising LIS ensures professionals remain up-to-date with emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, cloud storage, and digital repositories.

9. Ethical Handling of Information

10. LIS practice promotes the ethical use of information, respect for copyright, intellectual property rights, and confidentiality of records.

11. Social Inclusion and Community Development

12. Libraries and information centres provide inclusive services to marginalised groups (e.g., persons with disabilities, rural communities, women, and children), thereby promoting equity in access to knowledge.

Contemporary Relevance of LIS

In today's knowledge society, the study and practice of LIS are more relevant than ever before. The rapid growth of the internet, social media, and digital platforms has created an overwhelming abundance of information. Without LIS, this "information explosion" would lead to confusion and misinformation. LIS ensures information is filtered, verified, and made accessible in a structured and meaningful way.

Conclusion
The study and practice of Library and Information Science are essential for preserving human knowledge, supporting education and research, promoting national development, and ensuring equitable access to information in both traditional and digital formats.
LIS is not only about books and libraries; it is about managing knowledge for the progress of society. Therefore, it remains an indispensable discipline in the 21st century and beyond.